Socialist Worker

IRISH PRESS: SUPPORT THE OCCUPATION

The Irish Press management's actions in requesting all NUJ members to vacate the premises and in sacking 430 workers in other unions is a disgraceful attack on workers' rights and union power in the press.

It is obvious that the sacking of Colm Rapple was simply an attempt to engineer a dispute in which the workers could be branded as threats to the future of the company. But the truth will out.

Irish Press management is attempting to replicate a Wapping style defeat on the NUJ with the eventual goal of selling the newspaper title to a Murdoch type media mogul.
Now the unions must respond in equally strong fashion.

The decision to occupy by the NUJ chapel is a firm step. But the other 430 workers should not be allowed stew on the sidelines. Divisions in the workforce will only strengthen the hand of management. Instead solidarity is the key to beating back these attacks in the Irish Press. NUJ members should attempt to involve all of the workers affected. Calls for support from other workers in the Irish Press will have a resonance as these workers have the same interests and face the same attacks.

Such support should be sought instead of looking to the LRC. The L.R.C. has consistently sided with the likes of David Schramm in Packard, and John Behan in TEAM, people who have acted as hatchetmen on jobs and conditions.

This dispute will be a testcase for management in all the other dailies. It could lead to the defeat of the unions in the print industry or the beginning of a fightback. At this conference, the NUJ leadership should be pushed to organise solidarity from workers in other papers.

The occupation gives the workers a unique opportunity. The premises on Burgh Quay can be used as a base of activity. Delegates should be sent to argue the case of the Irish Press workers in various workplaces. Up to date bulletins should be produced as a way of counteracting the inevitable management propaganda.

From Packard, to TEAM, to the teachers, thousands of Irish workers are under attack.The workers in Irish Press are now in the same position.

Labour and Democratic Left have dismally failed to challenge the power of the Golden Circle. **We need a party of our own that will challenge the Irish rich and their onslaught against workers. Socialist Worker is building such a party. JOIN US**

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